

***The modernity of the Dutch  
countryside from the 17th to 19th  
centuries: specialisation, social  
mobility and intergenerational  
succession in the northern  
Netherlands***

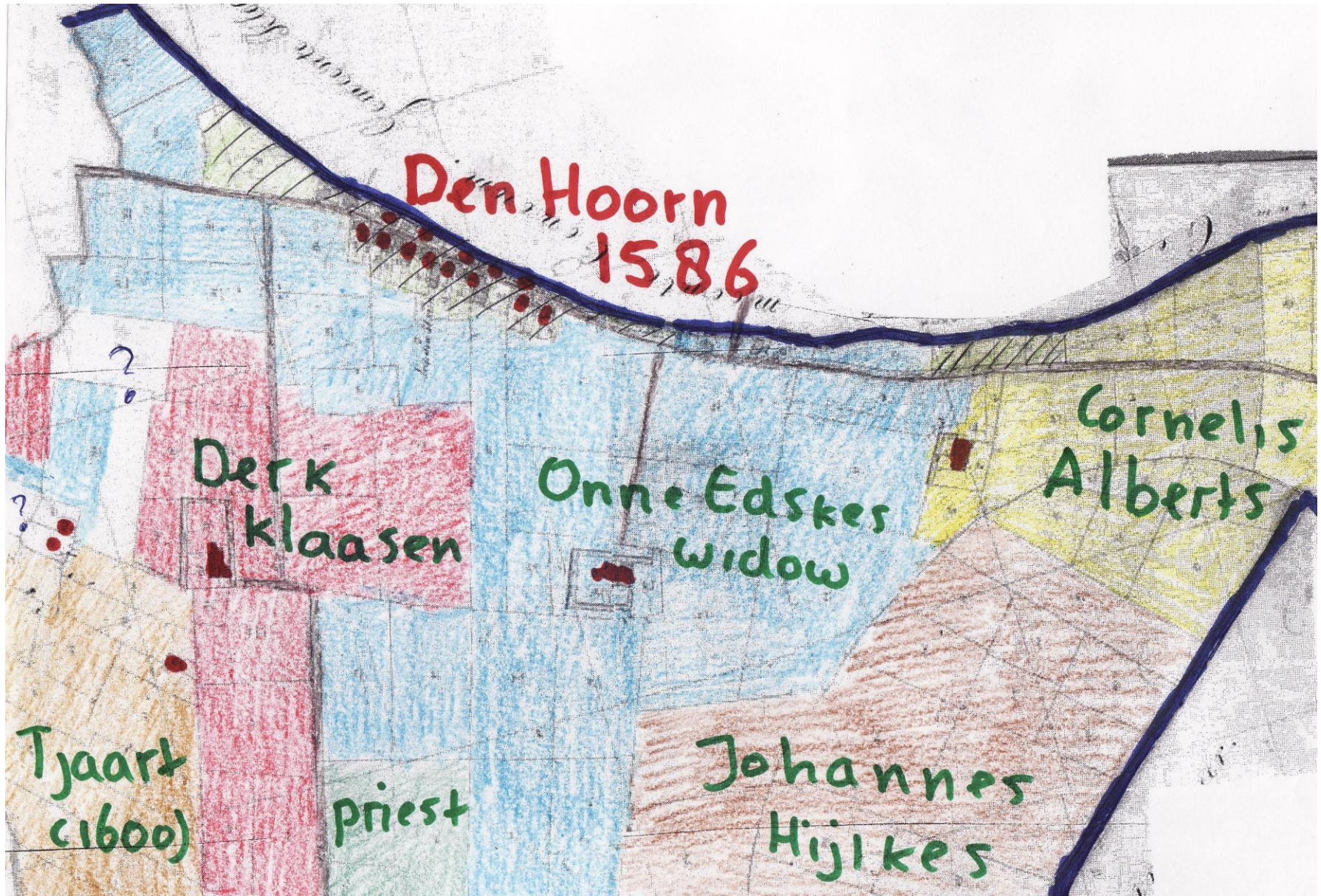
**Richard Paping (University of Groningen)**

Presentation for the Cambridge Group for the History  
of Population and Social Structure

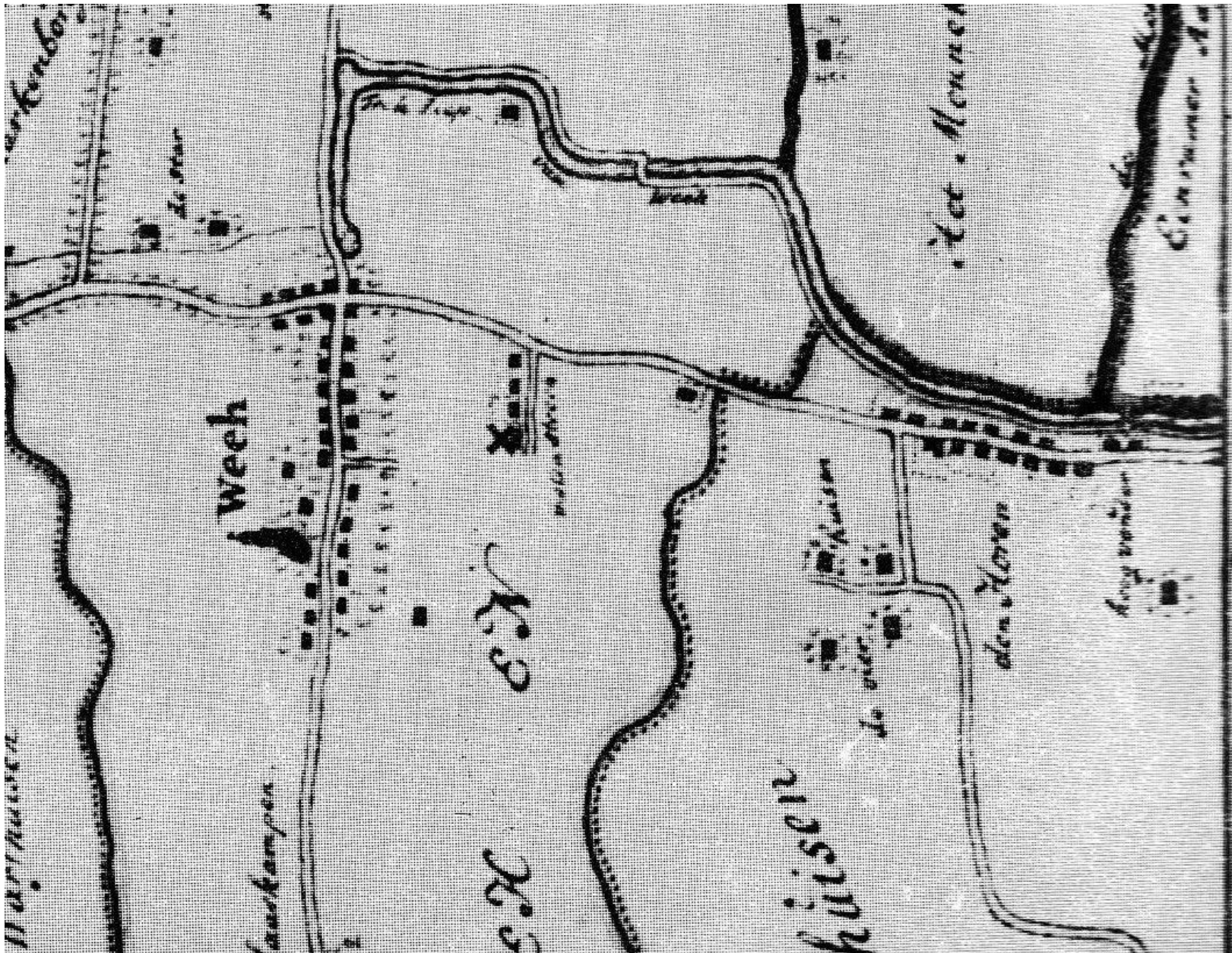
26 November 2007

- Introduction: Den Hoorn 1586
- Dutch Population and occupational structure 1400-1900: coast and inland
- Groningen
- A social stratification model
- Age at marriage
- Social mobility
- Succession
- Conclusions

# Houses and land use in Den Hoorn (Groningen) 1586



# Map of houses around Den Hoorn about 1660





# The Dutch provinces

Zuidwolde (Gron.)



**Table 1: Very rough estimates of the Dutch occupational structure: share of the industry and services (excluding proto-industry)**

	% urban (total)	% non- agrarian	% rural coast	% non- agrarian	% rural inland	% non- agrarian	Total % non- agrarian
<b>1400</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>90%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>52%</b>
<b>1500</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>90%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>56%</b>
<b>1550</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>95%</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>57%</b>
<b>1600</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>95%</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>59%</b>
<b>1650</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>95%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>64%</b>
<b>1700</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>95%</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>63%</b>
<b>1750</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>95%</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>61%</b>
<b>1795</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>95%</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>60%</b>
<i>De Vries/ Woude end 18<sup>th</sup> century</i>	<b>38,4%</b>	<b>94%</b>	<b>15,3%*</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>46,3%*</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>65% or 59%</b>
<b>Census 1849</b>	<b>39%</b>		<b>25%</b>		<b>36%</b>		<b>55%</b>

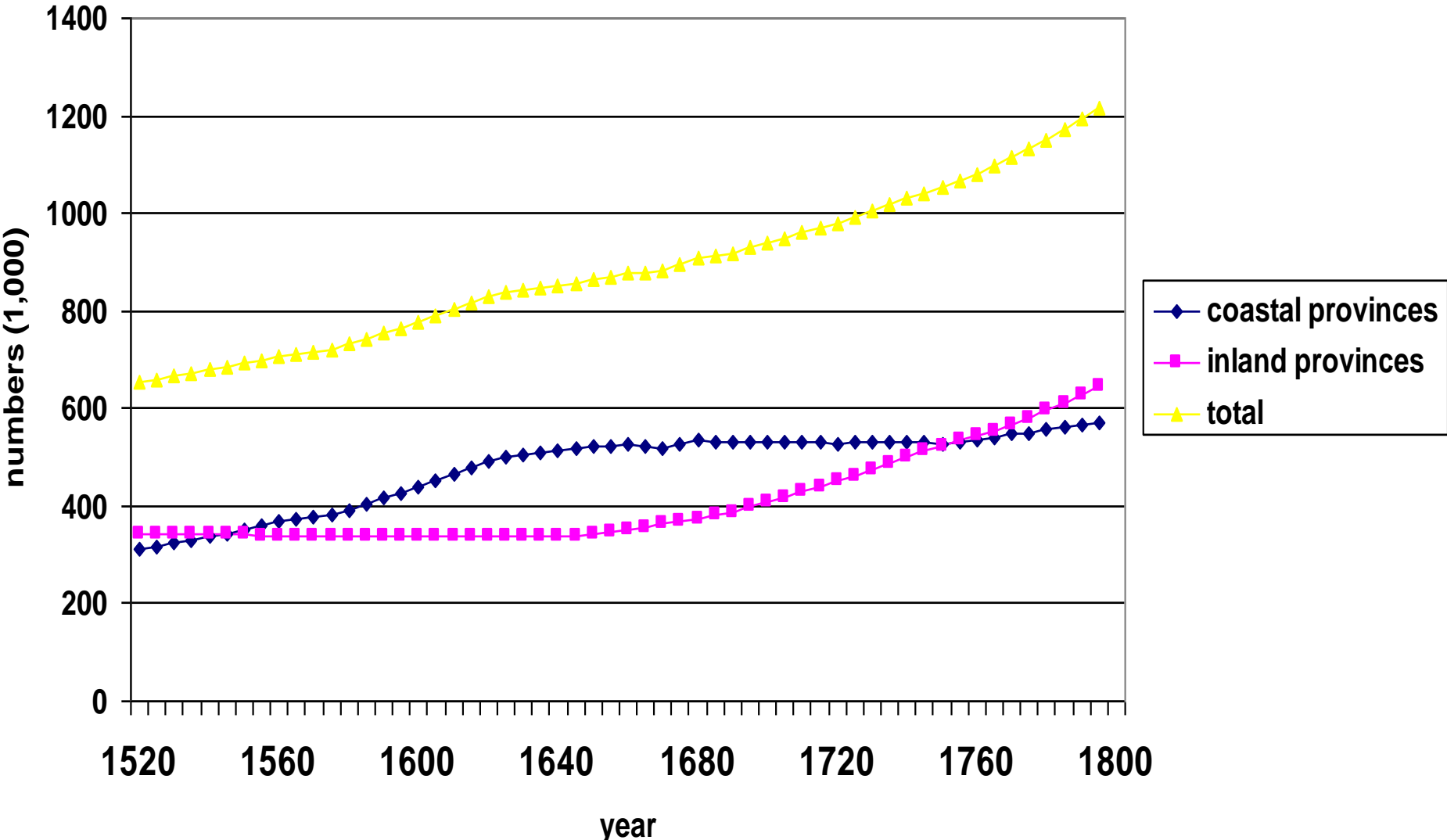
NB: De Vries and Van der Woude (1995) do not exclude proto-industry and use a division between Holland and the rest. Their data suggesting 65% (p. 604) seems inconsistent with their figure of 59% (p. 605). Census-data of 1849 is also including proto-industry.

**Table 2: Rough new estimates on the development of the Dutch population, 1400-1900 (in thousands).**

	<b>Total old (Faber)</b>	<b>Total new (Paping)</b>	<b>Rural</b>	<b>Rural (%)</b>	<b>Urban</b>	<b>Urban (%)</b>
<b>1400</b>		<b>750</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>33%</b>
<b>1500</b>	<b>900-1.000</b>	<b>1,000</b>	<b>650</b>	<b>65%</b>	<b>350</b>	<b>35%</b>
<b>1550</b>	<b>1,200-1,300</b>	<b>1,100</b>	<b>700</b>	<b>64%</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>36%</b>
<b>1600</b>	<b>1,400-1,600</b>	<b>1,350</b>	<b>800</b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>550</b>	<b>41%</b>
<b>1650</b>	<b>1,850-1,900</b>	<b>1,700</b>	<b>850</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>850</b>	<b>50%</b>
<b>1700</b>	<b>1,850-1,950</b>	<b>1,850</b>	<b>950</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>900</b>	<b>49%</b>
<b>1750</b>	<b>1,900-1,950</b>	<b>1,900</b>	<b>1,050</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>850</b>	<b>45%</b>
<b>1795</b>	<b>2.078</b>	<b>2,030</b>	<b>1,176</b>	<b>58%</b>	<b>854</b>	<b>42%</b>
<b>1850</b>	<b>3.057</b>	<b>3,057</b>	<b>1.827</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>1,230</b>	<b>40%</b>
<b>1900</b>	<b>5.104</b>	<b>5,104</b>	<b>2,580</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>2,524</b>	<b>49%</b>

**Source: new estimates using a wide range of published regional figures and the urban figures of Lourens and Lucassen (1997) and De Vries (1984). The urban figures include all small settlements with city rights, later on municipalities with settlements containing at least 0,2% of the Dutch population were also included. Old figures are from Faber e.a., Population changes and economic developments in the Netherlands: a historical survey, AAG Bijdragen 12 (1965) 47-113. NB: Preliminary data. I still want to refine these estimates further using more local statements in literature.**

# Graph 1. General development of the Dutch rural population, 1520-1795

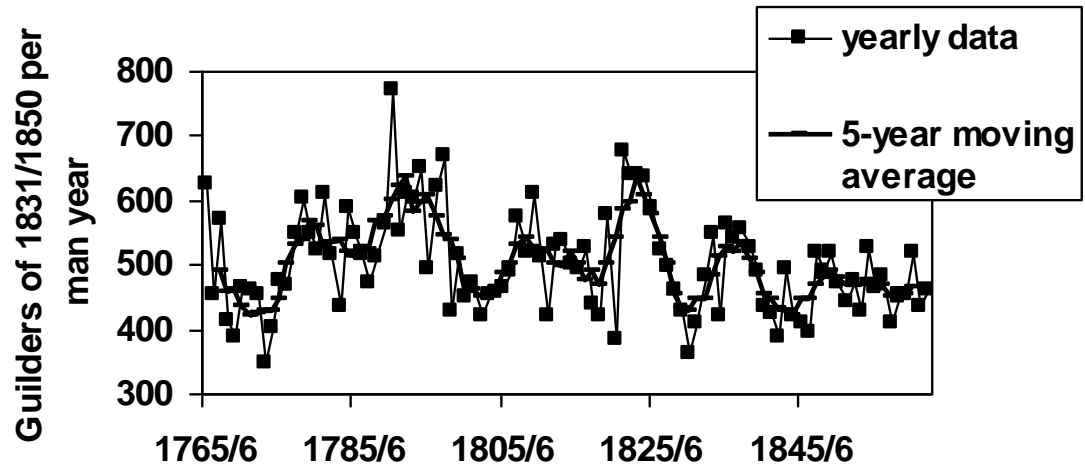




# 1650-1850

- Continuous fall in urbanisation-rate and rise in share of agrarians
- Shift in population from urbanised coast to more rural inland
- Population in coastal area falls until 1750, around 1750 growth resumes in periphery and around 1790 growth accelerated. After 1815 population grows everywhere (even in Holland) with c. 1%
- Agricultural labour productivity falls slightly in coastal area 1790-1850 due to rising labour input (decreasing marginal returns)

Agricultural productivity per capita in the Groningen Clay Area 1765-1862



- Relative agricultural prices: 1670-1750 go down; 1750-1818 go up; 1818-1840 go down and low; 1840-1878 go up.

# Characteristics Groningen Ommelanden 18th/19th century

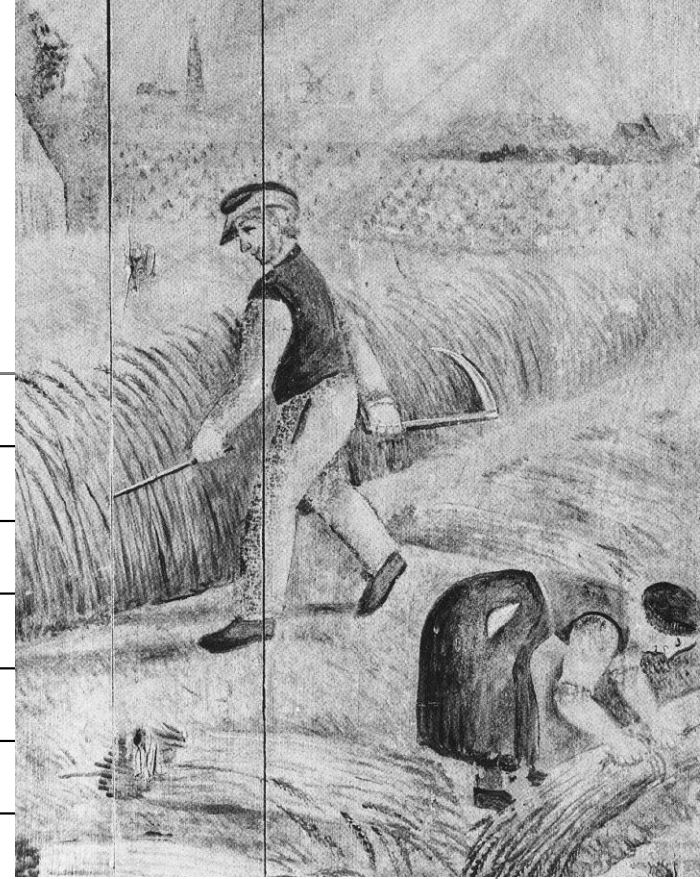
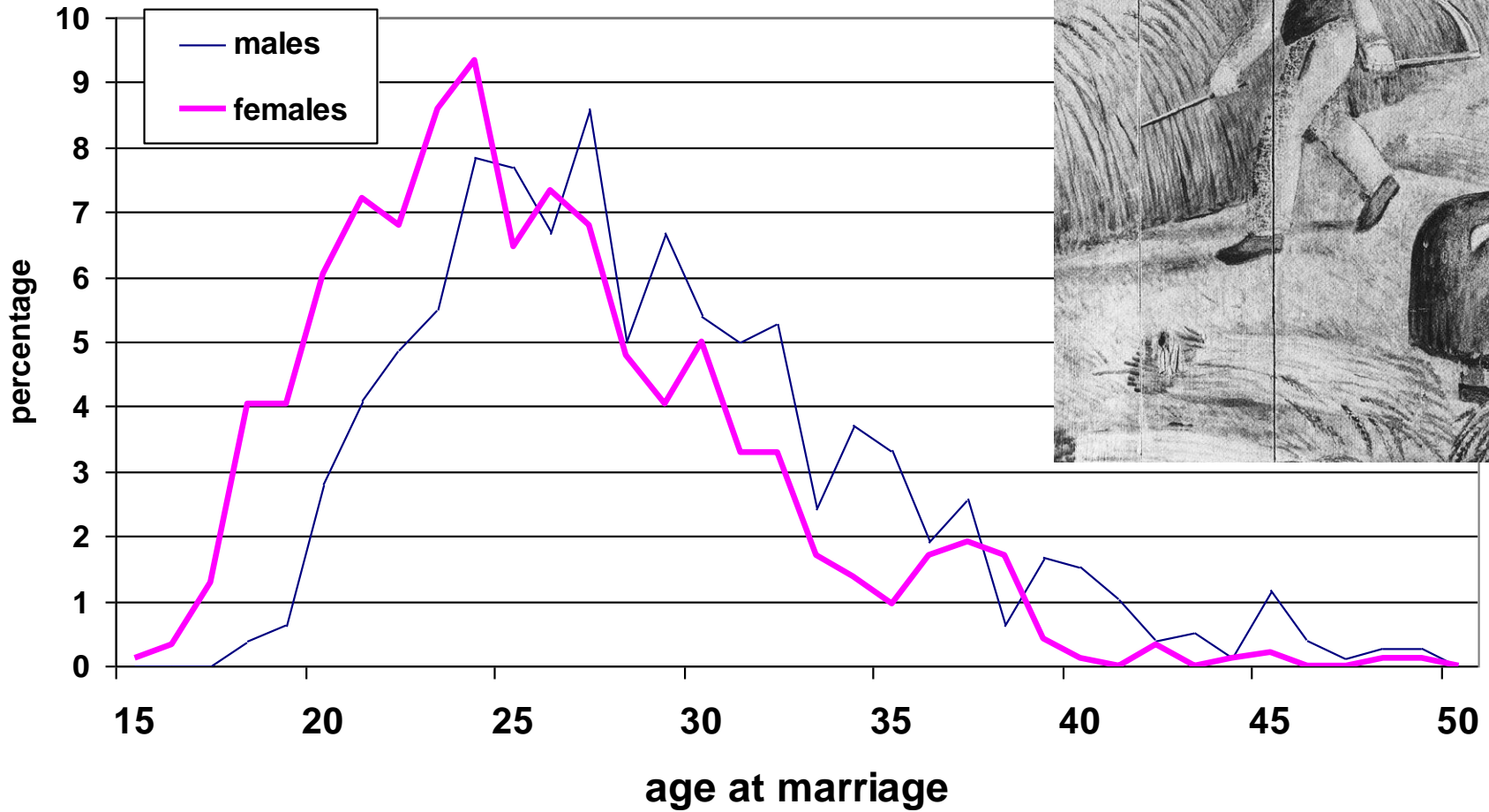
- Part of the very wealthy Dutch coastal area
- Rural area near large city
- Market-oriented agriculture and high specialisation (30% farmers, 30% labourers, 40% artisans, shop-keepers)
- Proletarianisation from ca. 1780 onwards
- Equal partition of inheritances between sons and daughters (mostly a 16th and 17th century development)
- Indivisibility of nearly all the farms, houses and social positions
- High ages at marriage and 10% celibacy



# Dataset used

- A family reconstitution of all the Roman Catholics (5% population) born between 1721 and 1800 in the Groningen Ommelanden (1,000 km<sup>2</sup>) comprising about 2,000 adult persons
- 779 male and 934 female (reliable) ages at first marriage (more than 80% of all the marriages)
- Information on: 1. death of parents, 2. social position and occupation of parents and after marriage (amount of land used), 3. number of (surviving) siblings, 4. birth order
- Labourers are slightly underrepresented, indigent artisans overrepresented in the dataset

**Graph 2: Age at first marriage, birth cohorts  
Groningen Ommelanden, 1721-1800 (percentage)**



**Table 3. Average tax position and occupation of heads of households and boarders in the Groningen clay area (1810, 1830/1850) and Oosterhesselen (1840) ranked from 0 (lowest) till 100 (highest).**

	Groningen clay area 1810	Groningen clay area 1830/1850	Oosterhesselen (Drenthe) 1840
Labourers	27	32	19
Tailors	34	45	47
Meat cutters	36	44	26
Carpenters	40	46	50
Weavers	41	46	35
Shoemakers	44	47	39
Shippers	50	48	
Schoolmasters	59	62	48
Coopers	60	61	48
Publicans	63	52	
Merchants	65	55	79
Shopkeepers	65	61	49
Corn millers	66	85	65
Blacksmiths	70	70	86
Bakers	70	74	80
Physicians	70	85	
Clergymen	78	85	94
Farmers	81	80	66
N (Total counted)	2,139	3,549	174

**NB: Only occupations with at least ten observations in both Groningen samples.**

**Table 4. Occupational groups and the average tax positions in the Groningen clay area 1830/1850.**

	<b>Average</b>	<b>Stand. deviation</b>	<b>0-40%</b>	<b>40-60%</b>	<b>60-70%</b>	<b>70-80%</b>	<b>80-90%</b>	<b>90-100%</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>Labourers</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,129</b>
<b>Female occupations</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>Skilled labourers</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>109</b>
<b>Employers &amp; self-emp. (low investm.)</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>356</b>
<b>Small farmers</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Employers &amp; self-emp. (medium investm.)</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>755</b>
<b>Educated employees &amp; self-employed</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>80</b>
<b>Farmers</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>534</b>
<b>Factory owners etc. (high investm.)</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>58</b>
<b>Highly educated employees &amp; self-empl.</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>89</b>
<b>Without occupation</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>355</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>3,549</b>

**NB: Employers and self-employed are active in industry and economic services. (Highly) educated employees and self-employed are active mainly in social services. Factory-owners etc. include millers, large merchants and land owners.**

***Table 5. A social stratification of heads of households for the Groningen countryside in the 18th and first half of the 19th century based on occupations, land use and other information.***

- A.**
  - 1. Large farmers (30 hectare and over), land owners, nobles.
  - 2. Large merchants, higher officials, large factory owners; Physicians, millers etc. controlling more than 5 hectare.
- B.**
  - 1. Medium-ranged farmers (15 to 30 hectare).
  - 2. Middle ranged merchants, large shopkeepers and inn-keepers, physicians, millers, small factory owners, priests, medium-ranged officials, ship-captains (sea), medium-ranged officials; artisans and others controlling more than 3 hectare.
- C.**
  - 1. Small farmers (5 to 15 hectare).
  - 2. Artisans with a workshop (bakers, smiths, coopers, glaziers, coppersmiths, silversmiths, shoemakers), trading business or owning a piece of land, small shopkeepers and inn-keepers, master of a barge or inland ship, lower officials.
- D.**
  - 1. Crofters and farm labourers controlling 1 to 5 hectare, milkmen, gardeners.
  - 2. Artisans without a real workshop (tailors, carpenters, seasonal slaughterers), weavers, pedlars, commission agents (no merchants), carriers without land, police men.
- E.**
  - 1. Farm labourers.
  - 2. Labourers in industry and handicrafts, lower skilled subordinate workers in services, servants, paupers, soldiers.

**Table 6: Social class after marriage and age at first marriage, MALES**

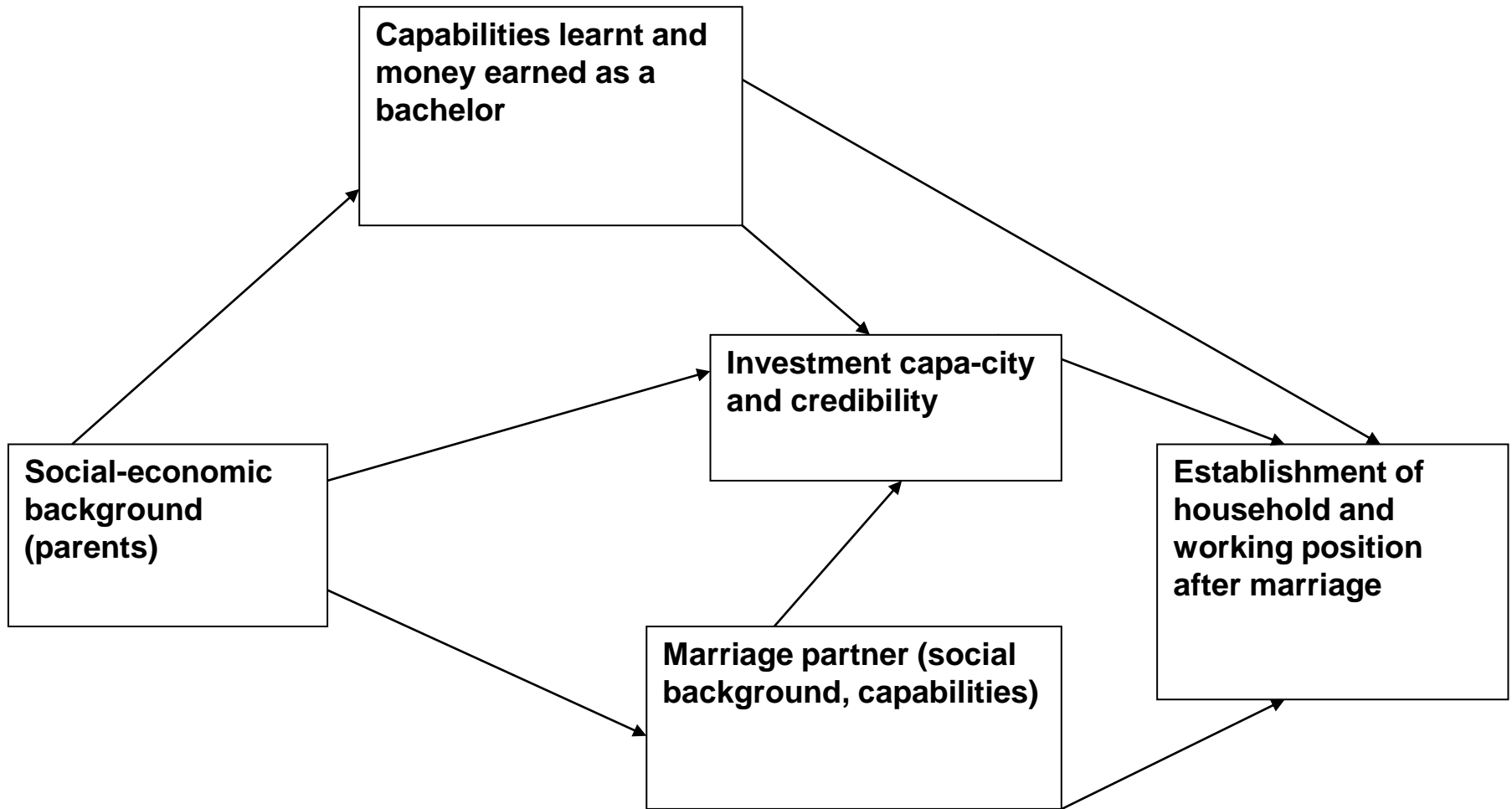
	birth 1721/1770				Birth 1776/1800			
	average	median	st.dev.	N	average	median	st.dev.	N
<b>A</b>	<b>29.6</b>	<b>28.1</b>	<b>7.9</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>28.4</b>	<b>26.7</b>	<b>6.2</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>32.7</b>	<b>32.2</b>	<b>7.3</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>28.2</b>	<b>27.8</b>	<b>6.2</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>C</b>	<b>32.3</b>	<b>29.9</b>	<b>9.7</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>28.4</b>	<b>27.2</b>	<b>5.0</b>	<b>66</b>
<b>D</b>	<b>29.4</b>	<b>29.2</b>	<b>5.4</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>27.5</b>	<b>26.7</b>	<b>5.7</b>	<b>65</b>
<b>E</b>	<b>30.8</b>	<b>29.5</b>	<b>6.6</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>27.6</b>	<b>25.7</b>	<b>6.1</b>	<b>68</b>
<b>Migrant</b>	<b>31.9</b>	<b>31.0</b>	<b>8.1</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>27.1</b>	<b>25.2</b>	<b>5.2</b>	<b>24</b>

**Table 7: Social class after marriage and age at first marriage, FEMALES.**

	Birth 1721/1770				birth 1776/1800			
	average	median	st.dev.	N	average	median	st.dev.	N
<b>A</b>	<b>25.9</b>	<b>24.5</b>	<b>6.2</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>22.1</b>	<b>21.6</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>26.5</b>	<b>25.5</b>	<b>7.4</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>25.3</b>	<b>24.9</b>	<b>6.0</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>C</b>	<b>27.7</b>	<b>27.3</b>	<b>5.9</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>25.2</b>	<b>24.0</b>	<b>4.9</b>	<b>82</b>
<b>D</b>	<b>28.1</b>	<b>27.1</b>	<b>5.8</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>25.2</b>	<b>24.9</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>99</b>
<b>E</b>	<b>27.5</b>	<b>27.0</b>	<b>4.7</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>25.9</b>	<b>24.9</b>	<b>4.7</b>	<b>94</b>
<b>Migrant</b>	<b>28.6</b>	<b>26.5</b>	<b>6.5</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>25.7</b>	<b>24.7</b>	<b>6.4</b>	<b>46</b>



*Relations between social background and social position before approximately 1900.*



**Table 8. Social mobility of married Roman Catholics born between 1721 and 1800 in the Groningen Ommelanden.**

	PARENTS					
CHILDREN	A: Nobility, upper middle class and large farmers	B: Middle class and medium- ranged farmers	C: Lower middle class and small farmers	D: Indigent artisans and crofters	E: Sub- ordinate and unskilled labourers	Total
A	53%	16%	3%	2%	1%	15%
B	23%	24%	12%	3%	3%	13%
C	10%	28%	33%	19%	12%	21%
D	3%	14%	20%	45%	24%	22%
E	4%	11%	17%	20%	54%	20%
Left the Ommelanden	6%	7%	15%	12%	6%	10%
Total	(20%)	(18%)	(23%)	(24%)	(16%)	N = 1,838

**Source:** Groningen Roman Catholic Dataset. Social positions are measured about ten years after marriage.

**Table 9. The number of social classes risen or fallen (N= 1,660).**

	<b>+4</b>	<b>+3</b>	<b>+2</b>	<b>+1</b>	<b>Equal</b>	<b>-1</b>	<b>-2</b>	<b>-3</b>	<b>-4</b>
<b>Males</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>1%</b>
<b>Females</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>1%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>1%</b>

**Table 10. Civil status of heads of households of the 28 farms in Kloosterburen, 1800-1830.**

<b>Couples</b>	<b>widows</b>	<b>widowers</b>	<b>Unmarried</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>79%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>760 years</b>

**Source:** Database on the use land of land in the eastern Marne, 1591-1830.

**Table 11: Occupational mobility of married Roman Catholics born between 1721 and 1800 in the Groningen Ommelanden and remaining there (n=1660).**

	PARENTS				
SONS	Farmers	Labourers /cottagers	Artisans	Other occupations	Total
Same occupation/ farm size	42%	43%	48%	28%	42%
Related occupations	26%	22%	13%	21%	21%
DAUGHTERS					
Same occupation / farm size	31%	36%	22%	12%	27%
Related occupations	26%	25%	16%	15%	22%
ALL CHILDREN					N
Farmers	62%	9%	5%	13%	492
Labourers and cottagers	17%	61%	18%	25%	444
Artisans	12%	24%	65%	29%	516
Other occupations	10%	6%	12%	34%	208
Total (N)	669	324	460	207	1660

**Source: Groningen Roman-Catholic Dataset.**

**Table 12. The transfer of farms in the Groningen Ommelanden, ca. 1710 –ca. 1820.**

	<b>Roman Catholic farmer couples marrying 1701-1780 (last farm only)</b>	<b>All transfers of farms in Kloosterburen and Wierhuizen 1721-1820</b>
<b>To daughter</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>13%</b>
<b>To son</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>17%</b>
<b>Widow remarrying</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>15%</b>
<b>Widower remarrying</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>9%</b>
<b>Inherited by other related persons</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>2%</b>
<b>Sold</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>44%</b>
<b>N</b>	<b>340</b>	<b>184</b>

**Source:** Groningen Roman Catholic Dataset; Database on the use of land in the eastern Marne, 1591-1830.



**Table 13: The history of two large farms in Kloosterburen (Groningen), 1500-1800.**

<b>HALSEMAHEERD (50 ha)</b>	<b>BOKEMAHEERD (35 ha)</b>
<b>c. 1510 son? Garbrant Halsema</b>	<b>1503 buyer Luitke Bokuma</b>
<b>1540/60 sons Jacob and/or Reiner Halsema (?)</b>	<b>1540/60 son Hebel Luitkes (?)</b>
<b>c. 1571 son-in-law (?) Broerke Does (Halsum)</b>	<b>c. 1573 son Garbrant H. Bokema (nearly broke)</b>
<b>1595 heir/nephew Jacob Halsema (+c1620)</b>	<b>1615 buyer Popke Popkes (Bokema)</b>
<b>1627 widow remarries Klaas Jacobs (Halsema)</b>	<b>1631 buyer Boele Julles (nearly broke)</b>
<b>1647 son-in-law Rinje Tammes (Halsema)</b>	<b>c. 1659 buyer Allardus a Besten (broke)</b>
<b>1667 son Schelte Rienjes Halsema</b>	<b>1670 buyer dr. Gleints widow (broke)</b>
	<b>1679 buyer merchant Peter van Londonborg</b>
	<b>1683 buyer Abel Cornelis</b>
<b>1692 Schelte remarries</b>	<b>1689 buyer Meindert Haijes</b>
<b>1697 Schelte remarries</b>	<b>1704 son Tamme Meinderts</b>
<b>1714 son-in-law Freerk Willems</b>	<b>1711 buyer Klaas Jans Borgman</b>
	<b>1730 son Jannes Klaasen Borgman</b>
	<b>1740 widow remarries Hilbrant Nitters</b>
<b>c. 1750 the children</b>	<b>1745 buyer Ipe Munting</b>
<b>1755 son-in-law Julle Jans (+1802)</b>	<b>1777 son-in-law Klaas Everts Borgman</b>

**Table 14. Sons and daughters of Ommelanden Roman Catholics (born 1721-1800) taking over the house(hold) of parents or other relatives as heirs / successors before or within 10 years after their marriage.**

	<b>Sons</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Daughters</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>A: Nobility, upper middle class and large farmers</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>191</b>
<b>B: Middle middle class and medium-ranged farmers</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>171</b>
<b>C: Lower middle class and small farmers</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>238</b>
<b>D: Indigent artisans and crofters</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>204</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>224</b>
<b>E: Subordinate and unskilled labourers</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>162</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>836</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>986</b>

**Source: Groningen Roman Catholic Dataset.**

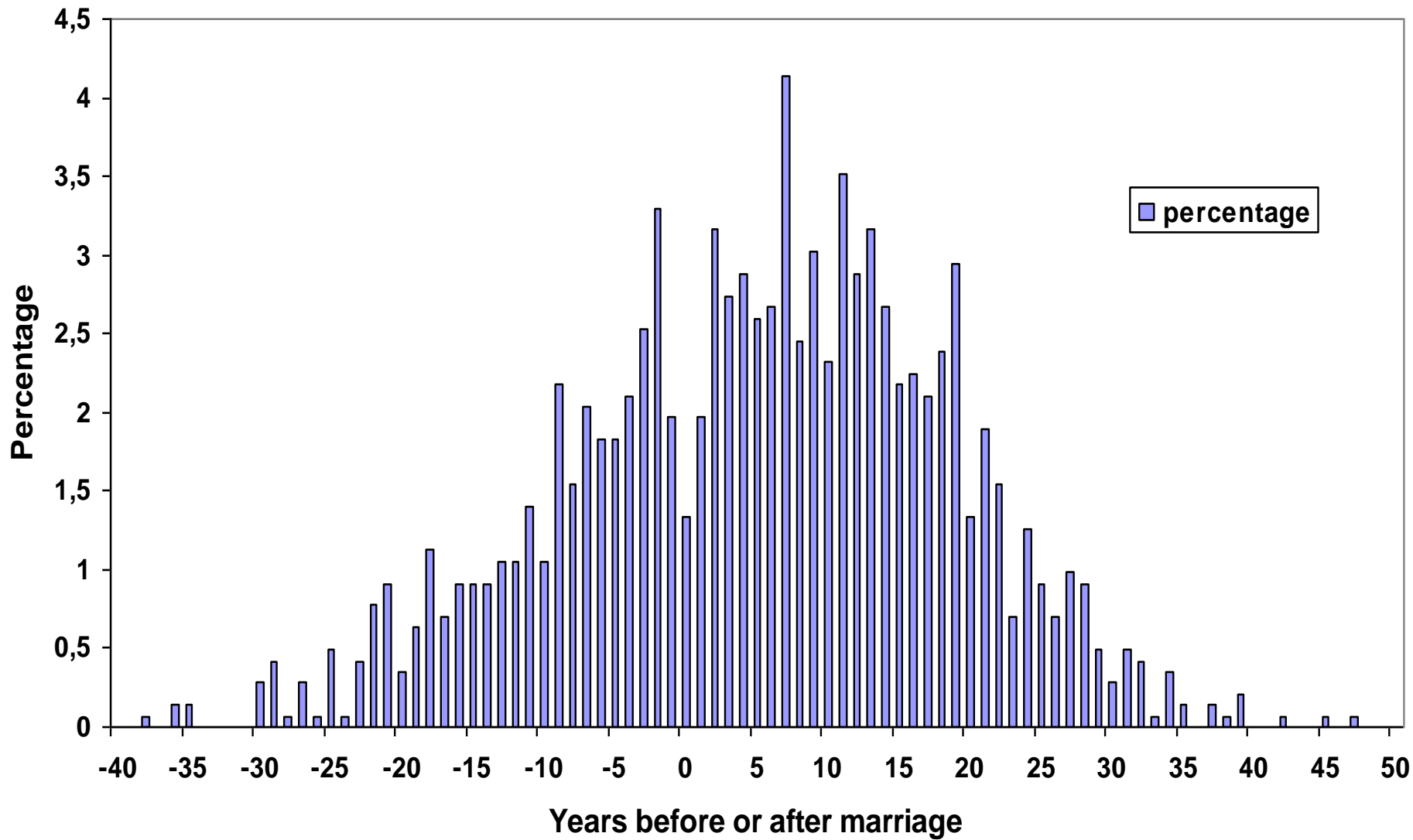
**Table 15: Intergenerational social mobility and the number of surviving siblings, children from farmer couples using more than 5 hectare born 1721-1800 in the Groningen Ommelanden.**

	upward	equal	Downward 1 level	Downward 2-4 levels	Emigrated	N
<b>Only child</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>One brother or sister</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>104</b>
<b>Two brothers or sisters</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>176</b>
<b>Three brothers or sisters</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>116</b>
<b>Four brothers or sisters</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>113</b>
<b>Five brothers or sisters</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>81</b>
<b>Six to eight brothers or sisters</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>675</b>

**Source: Groningen Roman-Catholic Dataset . NB: Only full brothers and sisters are taken into account.**



**Graph 3: Death of last parent in years before or after marriage, Birth Cohort Groningen Ommelanden, 1721-1800**



# Conclusions: the modernity of the 18th century Northern Dutch countryside

- A diversified rural occupational structure with high percentages working outside agriculture (specialisation): high non-food consumption level
- Production for efficient markets, self-provision is unimportant
- High agricultural labour productivity, but incapable of absorbing more labour without falling productivity (no tendency of rising of TFP).
- Large (unexplained) spread in ages at marriage suggest much decision freedom
- Large occupational mobility: kind of work was not predestined
- Large social mobility with many chances to rise, but also fall: efficient distribution of labour and supervision rights. Not only inherited capabilities but also personal capacity was of importance (meritocracy?)
- Succession of parents was of limited importance
- Social chances and succession rights were nearly equal for the sexes, despite gender-related division of most labour activities
- Hypothesis: Efficient economic system, which possibly has reached it's welfare ceiling already by 1650

Question: What were the resemblances and differences with the English countryside in the 18th century?